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TWO PAPERS

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BY THE

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CALM OBSERVER,

Dr. Bonj^r Vaughan.

NOT PRINTED IN THE

COLLECTION OF HIS LETTERS

EXTRACTED FROM THE

P. P. London

MORNING CHRONICLE.

1795.

ERRATA.

p. 1. At the top, read September 1. Strike out the third sentence in the same page, beginning with the words: *But even &c.*

In the same page, in the fifth sentence, for *but*, read: *and*.

p. 3. l. 7. before *seductive*, insert *civil*.

p. 7. l. for *they*, read *these powers*.

p. 11. l. 11. transpose as follows; in the *East-Indies* our old dominions.

p. 12. In the paragraph marked 6°. strike out the beginning of the fourth sentence from *The most &c.* down to the second *and* placed before *every*; which read: *Every*; & make it begin a new sentence.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The two following pieces, a few fragments excepted, are omitted in the two editions which have been made of the collection of the Letters of the *Calm Observer*, first published in London in the *Morning Chronicle*; and they are of course wanting in the German translation. The first of these pieces contains advice to the English nation, before its war with France; and the second, advice to the French nation, before its war with Austria; and both are to be found in the *Morning Chronicle* for August 28 & 29, and September 3, 1792; that is before the abolition of monarchy in France. The latter piece of the present publication was written so early as the summer of 1791, and (one or two passages excepted) was soon after translated into French; having been inserted by M. Duquesnoy, member of the Constituent Assembly, in N^o. 38 of his *Ami des patriotes*.

These pieces seem to have been withheld from the *Collection* of the letters of the *Calm Observer*, from an apprehension that they contained predictions and principles likely to displease many, whom the author sought to convince by other representations which were less unwelcome. The prophecies however having since been verified by time, and the principles having been rendered familiar by misfortune, there seems no reason why they should not be rescued from their momentary oblivion; in order to concur with other evidence, in demonstrating the necessity of peace and of salutary reforms throughout Europe. — Still more to contribute to

ADVERTISMENT.

this happy event, the following sentence is extracted from Robertson's history of Charles the fifth, respecting the crusades; from which the modern crusaders against France may learn as well consolation, as advice. "*The only common enterprize in* „ which the European nations ever engaged & „ which all undertook with equal ardor, remains a „ *singular monument of human folly.*"

The order of time has been inverted in the placing of these pieces, since in imitation of great examples, it was thought that the completion of the prophecies contained in the former part of them, would give weight to the principles at present contained in their close.

The few mistakes which occur in these prophecies, partake of the errors of humanity; but the author seems at least to have aimed at the only method by which men can arrive at any gift in political foreknowledge: He has dispassionately generalized facts after the precedents of history & after the elements of the human character.

To the EDITOR of the MORNING CHRONICLE.

SIR,

London, September, 1792.

In case of an interference on the part of the British government by force, or even by intrigue, in the internal affairs of France, I conceive that to injustice we shall add folly; and that the folly will be double, inasmuch as such interference will not only be useless, but injurious to us.

In a discussion of this sort, to know the opinion of France, is an indispensable preliminary, and therefore it is equally necessary to know how that opinion is to be discovered. But even this will be nugatory, unless we can adopt truth wherever we find it, and startle at nothing upon account of its novelty. — The necessity of new rules to direct our decision upon French affairs, ought at least to be acknowledged by those, who have hitherto almost constantly been deceived respecting them, whether they have prophesied *want of zeal* in the public of France, or *certainity of success* in their opponents. The life of the politician is too brief to furnish him with much personal experience; but where even history itself is defective in precedents, our only recourse is to first principles, and to the theory of man. If a mariner finds himself in undiscovered regions, of what use is it to consult charts, which have no reference to them; or to rely upon any thing besides caution, joined to nautical and philosophical deductions?

To learn the opinion of the French at the present moment in matters of government, we must recollect, that every man in France has by this time arrived at the free exercise of his will; for those who are afraid to manifest their sentiments cannot be much depended upon. If the several classes of society then, according to the illustration of Sir William Temple, be supposed ranged in a political pyramid, the richer few forming the upper parts, and the numerous poor the lower; such a pyramid in France, on account of the great disproportion of the rich in that country to the poor, will be short as to its height and broad as its extent; especially as its upper parts are now wanting or imperfect. The question then is, where will the medium of weight, or centre of gravity, be found in this truncated pyramid: will it not reside low down in the neighbourhood of its base? If so, the great average of political sentiment in France (for inactive men go for nothing, and the rich for little more than their numerical influence),

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to be learned neither among the great, the affluent, the polished, or the renowned; but among the *many*. — The more the National Assembly is pressed by events, the more will this be true; because it will throw the means of power into the hands of the lower orders, demonstrably the most numerous; and the more will it debilitate and fetter the higher orders; an operation, whose effects will be indelible, till time shall produce another partition of society, and another order of rich and poor.

But to know the opinion of France individually, is not all. We must know its *collective* opinion. — In political contests, the advantage of being in *possession of the government* is unspeakable; for it implies the power of making laws both permanent and occasional, as well as of regulating the course of justice; it includes the command over armies and the public purse; and it also comprehends the administration of home and of foreign affairs, joined to all the advantages arising from fixed channels of information and communication. It is to have the disposal of the conductors, which convey the national electric shocks; it is to be master of the galleries, which lead to the several chambers of the political mine; it is to hold the rudder of the state vessel; it is to possess that cement, which constitutes the public force, and without which nations are a rope of sand. The operative opinions of France are then to be marked, not only by those of its popular assemblies, but by those of its actual governors. They are to be traced by means of a study of the new principles of the French, and by discarding all the rules of despotic, ceremonious, or sleepy politics. — Whoever proceeds upon different data, I affirm has been deceived, and I predict will again be deceived, in his opinion of French affairs.

I will go farther: I will say that the sentiments of the French will soon appear supported with an *unusual efficacy*. The zeal for a new-formed system is always ardent; and the naturally animated, I had almost said tempestuous, character of the French, when exerting itself in action, will receive from it a new impetuosity. Nor are the French wanting in circumstances capable of exciting other more phlegmatic nations; such as the desire of confirming their titles to their late purchases of church and other national lands; or their indignation at the sight of foreign enemies; who,

besides the usual predatory views of military princes, found their attack upon the *insulting* idea of being superior in the military art, and upon the *revolting* idea of delivering back the French a prey to that arbitrary government from whose oppressions they have with hazard and glory recently emancipated themselves. The old system would now only re-assume its sway to display suspicion and resentment, and would change a seductive government to a military despotic one; and afterwards, pay its foreign patrons by a sacrifice of a part of the territory, or by the aid of the whole of its dominions, in support of their farther plans of ambition and enormity. — And is there nothing sweet in the name of one's country; nothing natural in the pride of seeing it self-governed; nothing compulsive in the feeling of the protection due to innocent friends and their perishable property; nothing alluring in the hope of better times? — It is thus that the opinion of France is to be learned in its new situation.

Let us see then what are the facts which are indicated to us under these rules. — I shall begin with the army, which is a very important member of the public body in a time of contest. And such, in general, seems to be the temper of the 300,000 men which compose it, that upon the suspicion of disaffection, they have permitted the dismissal of several commanders in chief, and other inferior officers, though surrounded with troops otherwise attached to them; and, notwithstanding the influence of money and cajolery, the army, on the whole, is said to be reconciled to the daring measures of the Assembly. — As to the Assembly itself, it appears only to have lost one seventh of its numbers by desertion, and the great majority of the remainder seem to have but one opinion. — The Administrative Bodies in general appear no less favorably disposed, and a new election will probably soon produce in this respect a complete uniformity. — With regard to the people, perfect unity among them is needless; for whoever is *not against* them, and pays his taxes and personal service, is virtually with them. — But, to judge more directly of the general temper of France, we may observe, that the late events at Paris have either been every where received with joy or acquiescence, or else with indifference or submission; for a momentary repugnance, manifested in one or two towns, and since retracted, serves rather as a

confirmation than a contradiction to the rest. Among the better educated ranks of people, the judgment of many has been changed by a discovery of the intrigues of the court; and others, convinced of the fall not only of aristocracy, but perhaps of royalty, see that ambition hereafter must roll its tide in other channels, and therefore renouncing the vain attempts of being second in a losing cause, they seek to be among the first in a prevailing one. — But it is an imperfect description of France, to say that it is, on the whole, merely inclined to the present proceedings; for it is in general enthusiastic in one particular, of most consequence for us to know — an opposition to the *foreign enemy*. Out of the teeth plucked from that monster Despotism, soldiers in swarms spring up, as it were, from the earth, not armed indeed as with Cadmus (thanks to the late executive government), but eager to fight without arms, and without cloathing. In villages, where the Monarch could not extract a single recruit, the present Assembly finds a troop of them, and every little town has its Briareus with an hundred hands, whom no modern Hercules will ultimately be sufficient to conquer.

If such be the current of the public opinion in France, what can finally resist its force? — The French were at all times military; and most of them are now become doubly so, from nature and from ingrafted passions. The first quality in a military man is to make up his mind to die; the second is, to adopt the public cause as his own, and to sacrifice to it his personal comforts; and the third is, to be ambitious to signalize himself; dispositions which now seem common among the French, who have been *habituated* in every quarter during three years, not only to the expectation, but to the very “pomp and circumstance of war.” Discipline in this case is soon acquired, and its progress will quicken with defeat. — The military system of the French, *if we take it in all its parts*, is inferior to none in the universe. — As to generals, since the protestant wars, the French owing to the influence of nobility and favoritism, have had few generals of eminence, (and most these, it is to be observed, gained their reputation against *Germans*): But France is now inviting and rewarding merit, though springing from the lowest ranks; and military talents are among those which soonest ripen, being chiefly instinctive, and commencing often with an early youth. The hoary veteran, however, no longer

idly repofes under his laurels, but burfts from his confecrated retreat, in order to lead his fellow-townfmen to battle. — And if men of fashion, according to the King of Pruffia, are chiefly brave, *in order to fecure the efteem of thofe they live with*, the inferior orders in France have now a fimilar incentive; for no where in France are the people fo unfeeling and abject, as not to meet the brave with rapture, and the daffardly with execration; and there is fcarcely a foldier of fpirit in France, who does not fancy that by gallantry in the field, he fhall be noticed firft by the National Affembly, and thence by Europe and pofterity. — In fhort, the whole of France is eagerly given to praife and to blame; information of what paffes is univerfally circulated; and the fame mothers who rejoice at the idea of their fons going to fight for their country, would rather they fhould die gloriously and ufefully, than retreat with difgrace. In the ranks of battle therefore, if courage and felf devotion become inflamed in each by the fight of kindred paffions in others, modern Frenchmen will not be inferior to the Frenchmen of former ages. — We need ask for no more; for in the wars between French and Germans, each party has been worfted, in proportion as they have fought fartheft from their home; while immediately upon the frontier, France has constantly had the advantage. — It is of little ultimate confequence therefore, whether victory for the French comes in this campaign, or the next; while on the fide of their enemies, a prolonged war will only increafe their burthens. — The only dread of France (and that is temporary) is from its officers; but whenever this ceafes, either from the change of perfons, or of sentiments, the French in equal numbers, will prove at leaft the equals of their enemies; for the German foldier is only a proud and cold machine, but the French is a warm and fenfitive one; and acting numbers, are clearly on the fide of France. Till this great point, however, is fettled, and till their troops are accuftomed to large movements, the French are liable to great difafters, and to the effects of the impreffions arifing from them; but fuch events will foon be loft in the great fum of things, the whole depending upon the inclinations of the nation.

Let us now for a moment review the great finews of war in France. — Having juft fpoken of troops, I fhall only add, that

military persons always augur ill of popular exertions; but as men of art are ill-fitted to judge of men of soul, history takes a pleasure in recording both their errors and their refutation, where success was at all to be looked for. — Finances never can be wanting in a kingdom which is the richest in Europe; and which, in order to double and triple its funds for current service, has only to suspend its honorary engagements. Besides, France has no present occasion for *loans* from money-lenders, and pays for *every thing as it arises*, by means of taxes, of which none are anticipated; or else with assignats, which, if they should become discredited, will not more endanger the French Revolution, than the depreciation of paper money (forty for one) endangered that of America. Nor is it any thing new for France to turn bankrupt in the midst of war, and yet still to pursue it; and in any event she may levy money (as in our civil wars in England) by weekly assessments. — Respecting defences, France has few to the North which are natural; but it abounds in artificial ones, constructed by men who have served as masters in fortification to the rest of Europe; and if in consequence of new modes of attack in this inventive age, or other circumstances, these works should become untenable, their garrisons will be drawn off to reinforce their active armies. — Stores never can be deficient in a military, manufacturing, and agricultural country. — With regard to unity of government, the military and civil, the executive and legislative, are now acting affectionately as one; and while despotism only implies a command over the bodies of men, a popular government, to a command over the body joins that over the mind, and is obeyed by volunteers instead of slaves. In such a country, divisions seldom ultimately injure; for when small, they excite vigilance, and when great they are suppressed with vigor. — Such is the state of France, as to its enemies; who, if they conquer towns without garrisoning them, leave the people to revolt again, when occasions offer; and if they garrison these towns, are themselves weakened by it. If they divide their forces in the field, they will also be weakened, and introduce a war of detachments, in which the native forces will naturally have the advantage. If they move in a mass, they must run risques as to supplies; they will influence but a small part of the country at a time; and will

pass like an unwieldy vessel through stormy waves, which will soon hide its track, and perhaps finally produce its shipwreck. If they use cruelty, it will exasperate the country; and if they propose lenity, they will never employ enough of it: besides, who will trust to hyenas, feigning the voice of humanity, or to the tear of sympathy dropped from crocodiles? — In short, this is not an ordinary war, consisting merely of arms and tactics, but it includes the management of the human mind; and it is here that Voltaire's remark is eminently true, that *all great conquerors must be great politicians*. But the foreign powers who had folly enough to begin this war, will not in this view, have wisdom enough to conduct it; and no principle upon which the war was begun or continued, whether of a nature foreign or domestic, will admit of more than a momentary peace, should they be successful. The greatest conquerors, after all, must leave behind them the human mind, and woe to those who think that liberty has a memory which ever sleeps, or that time will ever be wanting in its opportunities. — If I speak with more decision on this topic than formerly, it is because (with the reserve hereafter to be mentioned) I think France strengthened as to its immediate means of resistance, by some of its late measures, especially by one, which others suppose to portend its ruin. *

As war is versatile, no opinion as to its issue can be worth any thing, which is not founded either upon system on one side, or upon a considerable course of occurrences on the other; for, after the severest defeats, it is always enough for the popular party to shew signs of life, to give room for hope. — And if there are even subjects of Austria and Prussia, who wish for a momentary success to these monarchs, the more effectually to plunge them in a foreign struggle, which may weaken their domestic power, a citizen of the world need not be terrified at such a prospect. — As to the capture of Paris, it will only amount to a possession of the residence of less than the fiftieth part of the people of France, abandoned in that moment by the chief of its male inhabitants; and which if retained, would only prove a Capua or a Saratoga. And is not America at present free, after having had a "vagrant congress;" and have not the capital cities of Philadelphia, New

* This is supposed to allude to the events of the tenth of August, 1792.

York, Boston, and Charleston, in that country, been in the possession of invaders, as well as Madrid, Rome, Dresden, *Prague*, and *Berlin* in Europe; to say nothing of *Vienna*, which was saved from the Turks by the Poles, who have since been so ungratefully treated; or of similar events in Italy, Bavaria, the Palatinate, and other smaller German States, all happening as it were, within the compass of memory? — The roughening manners, the growing attention to public affairs, the cry of equality, and even the garlands, processions and orations and other marks of honour given in France to the living and the dead (however scoffed at by nations who are led on *their* side by titles and ribbands), are circumstances which to a reflecting mind, denote strong tendencies to a republican spirit, and to proportional exertions and determination. Without hazarding any allusion *in facie Romuli* to a Roman senate, certainly ill represented in many respects by the present National Assembly, I may at least be allowed to remark, that the founders of Rome who lived by pillage, and committed a rape on the Sabine women, were not of more auspicious characters, than the abettors of the declaration of the rights of man, and the stormers of the Bastille; and I may add, as to the prospect of their success, that the experience of our own country proves, together with that of Rome, that it is easier to expel a Tarquin than to subdue a nation. — But concluding here these preliminary observations, doubtless long, but certainly necessary, let us inquire into the *means* of Great Britain to injure France, and the *interest* she has in using them.

Her means of injuring France are two; direct and indirect; or in other words, open and covert: But as intrigue, because it cannot be concealed, must, from the irritable state of the French nation, terminate in open hostility, the whole must be considered as resolving itself into force. Our force consists of three branches; navy, treasure, and troops. — As to *troops*, the temper of things at home considered, we can scarcely spare more than sufficient to form a strong advanced guard, or a considerable garrison, in a *continental* war, where every thing appears upon its largest scale. Yet, as the shambles for human flesh upon the continent are for the most part pre-engaged, and the fidelity of the troops to be employed

is that on which the whole undertaking depends, such land forces as are proper to be used are only to be found at home. A large proportion, however, of our recruits, if taken from Ireland, would be likely to desert, upon an occasion like the present; and in England, and a part of Scotland, the manufacturers, farmers, and others, bid too high for men, in opposition to government, for government to be successful in obtaining them; and in the remainder of Scotland, the number to be procured is comparatively small, and the process for it slow. — The matter then rests upon our navy and our treasure. As the French notoriously consider their foreign possessions in a subordinate view, no conquests from them of that description by means of our navy, would stop their proceedings in Europe. The practicability of a successful attack to be made upon *France* itself, we have already seen reason to doubt, especially as it would be difficult for us to act hostilely with any effect till the spring. — With respect to our *treasure*, doubtless there is a large gulph open, into which to pour it; but as it will be taken from the poor of the British empire, we must now consider the utility of the mode proposed for employing it.

This makes our next head of discussion: namely, the proof that we shall not *benefit* from an interference by force, in the internal affairs of France.

1^o. Despair (says the Eastern Proverb), is a Freeman; Hope, a Slave. Take away the *hope* of our neutrality, and France, hunted down to its last resource, will certainly form itself into an invincible republic, with Agrarian laws. The French are now accustomed to great changes; and many nations, as the Spartans, Athenians, and Romans, to say nothing of the Jews, have divided their lands, or annulled debts, with little struggle; in order, by producing equality, to multiply the adherents of a new government. — By warring with French principles, therefore, we may establish such principles in their fullest excesses. This has been the constant effect of the resistance made by the French court, the emigrants, the clergy, the pope, the dispossessed German princes, and the triumvirs, to the late proceedings in France. — And what will our secret service-money effect, applied by strangers, beyond the civil list of Louis XVI. applied by natives: and what did our secret-service money produce in America? — These striking experiments may surely serve to convince us, that when a great nation

turns its thoughts eagerly to politics, it is not easy to divert them. If an hundred thousand pounds sterling were spent upon the people in France, it would amount to less than a penny per head; and if spent upon their leaders, it would only discredit those leaders, if they attempted flagrant measures in consequence; and create other leaders in constant succession, to be constantly bribed, and perhaps, constantly to deceive and betray their employers. Besides, as the *French* civil list is suppressed, and the popular party commands all the resources of that government, we should be left to perform a *double* task of corruption alone.

2°. An interference by open force would make the French our determined and permanent enemies, and throw them into other hands. If France pursues her part with vigour, the powers of Europe will first feel the great danger and little profit of insulting her; and then, try and turn a connexion with her to account; as was verified in the case of Cromwell, an usurper as little acceptable to Europe as the National Assembly. — Why, then, are we unnecessarily to put ourselves into this position; especially considering the difficulty that will arise as to the terms of peace, should the French become conscious of their strength? — Men in *middling life*, like the present rulers in France, are of all others the least accommodating in times of difficulty; and to raise their obstinacy to the highest pitch, it is only necessary to throw them into the shape of a *society*, like that of the National Assembly. — Hence if the war goes on, let us not be surprized if the French insist upon the liberty of the Austrian Low Countries, and of the Electorates along the Rhine, as the conditions of peace with Austria; and so for other antagonists.

3°. The importance of a barrier against the designs of a *coalition* of ambitious European Powers, has been insisted upon formerly. — I shall only add, that while France preserves her present size, she will easily prevent wars, or impose peace, among such; and she will then also more easily incline to do it; not only because it will then be less of an effort to her, but because it will be oftener for her interest; for whatever are the interests of any *one* part of her dominions, she will then in turn cause to be supported by *all* the other parts. Whereas divide France, and then, instead of the *whole* of it being disposed to watch the balance of Europe,

partial feelings will arise, and only a fragment of it perhaps will adopt what might otherwise have been adopted by the whole; nay, the fragments may be contending with each other, or become a prey to other potentates, or involve us in their quarrels, or attend to their own affairs, instead of assisting in preserving the general tranquillity.

4°. Our own dominions are in a state not to make it wise for us to embark in troubles; Great Britain and Ireland having each causes of disquiet, visible or latent, which war will soon aggravate. Our West Indies also are in a state of inflammation; and our old dominions in the East-Indies require rest, and our new ones time to gain consistence, and both old and new demand much judicious encouragement. — The *natural* turn of what is called an *Opposition to Ministry*, will also be to contend against a war with France; and as a part of the opposition will do this with an applause of French principles, these principles will find their way into England, by a sort of under-current, when least expected; especially as the very war itself, had it no relation to France, would tend to *originate* such. — France, by intermeddling in the affairs of Corsica, America and Holland, taught her people to think; and Prussia and Austria will do the same, by intermeddling in the affairs of France; and why should the Crown and Aristocracy of England venture upon the same experiment? Surely the progress of Ireland towards independence in the American war, and the cry for reform generated by that war both there and in Great-Britain, ought to alarm the enemies of innovation. — Besides, if the French Government should take a *republican* shape, it is perhaps of all others that, which a *politic* aristocrate in Great Britain should wish for; because, first, it would more and more alienate from French examples, the British empire, which is bigotted to monarchy and a house of lords; and next it would give a pretext for not copying many parts of the French system, as *not analogous to a government constructed upon different principles*; and lastly, it would permit us to adopt other useful and even popular parts of it, to serve or to amuse the public here, without its leading to any consequences. — Unhappily men are constantly in danger of erring, in cases where fortune is to be compounded with: They will not distinguish between what is principal and

what is necessary; what can be given up and what retained. Thus Europe and the court of France might long ago have entered into an easy compromise with the French revolution; and *vice versa*, the popular party in France might have done the same with their opposers; but the principle of *all or nothing* has produced for both the deepest struggle.

5°. Without speaking at present of justice, all great projects for a country like ours, should be clear in their object, simple and within our own command as to their management, safe and economical in their execution, and certain and durable in their nature. — What then is our object with France? If it is to suppress *principles*, they lie in the writings of individuals, and in the minds of their readers; and if popular, they must spread by notice and persecution, especially in a country where the press is in a manner free. — If it is to *mould the French government*, does not this depend upon the employers of the Duke of Brunswick, rather than upon ourselves? and are we to render ourselves responsible for the benevolence of personages, who seek to "out-herod Herod," and to make the government and happiness of all dependent upon the will of one. — Besides, a plot, which depends for its conduct upon *arms*, and especially upon the arms of *allies*, is naturally of precarious issue. It is probable, that Prussia has communicated some pretended project on this subject to England; but still, while the councils of Prussia are swayed by a Minister who plays the part of the *cunning man* (as is said also for his own purposes), solidity of conduct seems little to be depended upon in that quarter, and it will *always* be doubtful while the same person influences. Nor is the continuance even of Austria in the league (her jealousy of the intentions of Prussia considered), at all to be depended upon. — And is it wise then, that we should make ourselves associates in a system, which, if it *holds in all its parts*, keeps us in a very secondary situation and at the command of others as to its object; and which, if it *dissolves*, leaves us as principals, to support the fury of a then victorious popular government, which would soon force a restitution of any maritime conquests, which we may have made in the interim? — All wars are evils, and the quantity of the evil can be known previously by no man. The nearest approach to fore-knowledge is experience; and a French war having generally lasted half a

dozen years, and cost at least an hundred millions sterling in the course of it, it becomes us to consider, whether the object now in view and the promise of success in it, are such as to fall within the following golden rule of Franklin, adopted by the constitution of Pennsylvania: 'Before any law is made for raising a tax, the purpose for which it is to be raised, ought to appear clearly to the legislature, to be of more service to the community, than the money would be, if not collected; which being well observed, taxes can never be a burthen.' — This rule is still more applicable in a case, where we are not bound to *act at all* in the way of arms, but on the contrary, must appear as meddlers; and where *nothing* is certain, but our expence.

6°. But even should success be certain, *success itself may be dangerous*. An overflow of prosperity even in private life, is often more than can be borne; but it is still more true of states, because in states there is a separation of interests kept up between the governors and governed. Independent of the insolence, wanton projects, and consequent envy, attending an overgrown (and in our case, an artificial) power, it is to be observed, that as the *imperial* government of Great Britain depends upon the British Parliament, which is notoriously liable to corruption; the more our *foreign* dominions increase, the more will they furnish wealth and patronage to increase corruption; and the more will a peaceable Reform of Parliament be thrown at a distance; especially as the foreign dominions alluded to, furnish (as has been admirably observed) no means of absorption for influence in a *local* struggle with the governed, but leave it undiminished to be transferred to act on the side of the Crown *at home*. — The most bigotted courtiers and aristocrats must allow, that from the nature of human affairs, decline follows all power left without a counterpoise (for, upon the case assumed, we should find none *at sea*); and every lover of his country must acknowledge, that there is such a thing possible, first as uncontrolled power, and then as despotism; and that nothing can be more likely to introduce these, than successfully to run down popular principles on the one hand, and boundlessly to increase the corrupting powers of the Crown on the other. — It is wisest therefore that we should remain as we are as to foreign dominions, if we do not even reduce our present proportion of them. — And what is wise as to new acquisitions, happily we

must pursue from necessity; for if Europe unites against France, upon a *system of plunder*, the brittle machines of its several partial governments will all be dashed to pieces against the rock of equal liberty (which has for its basis the *anxious* concurrence of every individual with the *general* government); and this will happen with each respectively, other things being equal, in *proportion to the violence of their collision*.

What then is to be the conduct of our administration, under present circumstances? — I have said, that any *secret* act of *hostility* to France would soon be converted into an open one; for when suspicion is alive, small proofs “are to the jealous, confirmation strong.” — Preferred councils are seldom valued; but the case is of a magnitude and pressure, to make every farther suggestion worthy of attention. It seems then, that every method should be taken to make our *interposition acceptable to the allies*, whether in the way of mediation, or even of pretended menace towards them. As to France, it is mad to think of forcing any thing there; we can only compound; and we must enter into the true spirit of their feelings and ideas, to produce even a composition. — In my opinion, after using the most affectionate exertions in favour of the *king*, it belongs to us afterwards to see what can be done between the *two nations*; on which head nothing can be more important than to fix the French in *pacific principles*, and an aversion to *foreign conquest*. We know the public *resolutions* of France to this effect: but nothing but a judicious inquiry can make these resolutions appear sincere to those who are subject to prejudice, or difficult of belief. The stream of all the French writings, however, for many years, has been both a cause and an index of this sentiment; and since the hatred shewn in France to courts is founded upon their supposed want of this sentiment, it would be as wise to doubt of the passion of France for individual liberty, as to doubt of that for general peace. What has been done in France respecting the French West Indies seems to be a confirmation of the little inclination of the French for foreign dominions, as well as a proof of the motive. — But to a passion for peace (which is evidently for the advantage of nations which are great proprietors, and perhaps not under just titles) it will be easy to add others, tending to the common happiness and improvement of mankind, in modes which have nothing to do with internal governments. — But I do

not dwell upon subjects, which if they do not strike at first will not succeed by force of reasoning; but shall only remark, that while pacific principles render harmless the greatest empires*; so peace at *present* is peculiarly suited to the interest of Great Britain and Prussia; for if we design to pay our debts on our side, and Prussia wishes to benefit by the circumstance of its having none to pay on its side; it is of great moment to stop a war, which will certainly liberate both France and Austria from the oppressive burthen of *their* debts, and render them as it were, renovated powers. — Happily the recal of our embassy from France, (which I must be allowed to term a piece of diplomatic foppery, and which was both hazardous and useless, and will cause the replacing of it to be an object unnecessarily marked) having nevertheless taken place without any incident following upon it, we are still at liberty in every respect to act for the best for our own interests and for those of mankind.

Let me now revert to the exception I made above, as to the prospects of France. — It is clear, that the French nation is sufficiently *capable* of being united against foreign enemies and domestic tyranny, provided its present Governors employ wisdom: But who can answer for a want of wisdom? — I am not one of those so shocked by the late proceedings at Paris, as to think of thence abandoning the cause of mankind; a resolution, which is more amiable, in my opinion, than either grand or just. I will not, upon account of a short-lived evil, recal eternal ones; or because of barbarity in a part of the citizens of one nation, condemn the rest of them and mankind in their company, to the parental tenderness of the triumvirate of Austria, Prussia, and Russia. I look upon the whole misfortune as having originated, first, in a neglected education of the mob; next, in the imprudence of the court; and, lastly, in the *impunity* allowed by the constitutional government to its opposers; insomuch, that I believe that only one person (M. Favras) has been *legally executed* in France down to the last month, on account of opposition to the new government; so that the mob, irritated by such forbearance, determined to take the sword of justice into its own hands. — But as they forgot to take the scales also, it becomes their leaders to think for them; otherwise severity

* As China, for example.

and persecution will have their usual effects; and the nation, while it loses all the good of the revolution, will be held responsible for all its evil. It becomes above all the assembly, as it acts with vigor, to act with humanity and temper; and to recollect, that reverses of fortune are possible, and that foreigners and posterity will in every event, have to judge them. — Thus to call in question the conduct of some, to whom the liberty of France is chiefly owing, because, unapprised of the wishes of the nation, they adhered to the constitution a few days longer than the Jacobins, will indeed be the height of ingratitude and injustice. — As to the *National Convention*, it becomes every Frenchman to make it respectable as to its choice, and free in its deliberations; for as there never was a moment when deeper interests were at stake and a more rapid decision required upon them; so never was there a moment when representatives will have been more decisively apprised of the wishes of their constituents, and consequently demand to be left freer from the interference of bystanders.

A Calm Observer.

REMARKS ON THE PROBABLE SUCCESS OF THE
FRENCH REVOLUTION.*

Aristocracy in *France* has no where appeared in a worse form than with the clergy, nor has it any where occasioned worse effects. They have to answer for having produced more infidelity in a few months, than all the *Voltaires* and *Humes* that ever appeared. Having converted religion into an engine to defeat a political revolution, they have naturally provoked attacks against all religion. The clergy forgot how dangerous it is, when any passion is predominant, to bring any other into competition with it, so as to force men to an alternative. — But if the clergy, not content with this first error, go on to a second, and encourage attempts at a counter-revolution by means of arms, the evil will be at its height. The human mind when once upon its march, is easily led on from step to step; and we may venture to prophesy,

* This piece is prior in its date to the preceding, having been written early in the Summer of 1791; translated & printed in the same Summer in France, & reprinted in August 1792. in England.

under such circumstances, that the catholic religion, in spite of the patriotic part of the clergy, will be supplanted in many cases, either by infidelity or by protestantism. — To prove that the clergy are wholly unsupported by Christianity, when they preach up civil war, let us ask whether Jesus Christ would have deluged his country with blood, in consequence of being deprived of a lacquay behind his coach, or of being reduced to dine upon a single course; for it would be insulting to talk of mistresses and debauchery? As our Saviour always kept politics asunder from religion, and employed none but evangelical means for propagating his doctrines, his modern disciples would do well to view the present universal change of temper in civilized nations, as the awful work of providence. The event is too mighty for accident, and too pregnant with consequences to be permitted through indifference. The clergy should, therefore, wait the issue of it with submission, lest *man* should be found contending against *God*. — Having said thus much of the clergy in a religious view, let us consider the aristocracy at large, both as to their strength in a civil war, and as to their objects in exciting it. *

As to their *strength*, I acknowledge it difficult to persuade men, who have been habituated to govern, that their power is gone for ever, by means which never occurred before in the annals of mankind. — The *causes* of the fact, however, will prove the certainty of its existence. The world has hitherto been divided into the many suffering, and the few enjoying; the many imposed upon, and the few profiting by imposition. But if the multitude in France were easily ruled when they were held fast in sleep or in chains, their puny masters are insufficient to control them at present; when sore with the past and sanguine as to the future, they have recovered their senses, their pride, and their liberty together. The many are possessed with ideas not only of their rights, but of their powers: they are become (and the consequences of it are immense), they are become *rulers in possession*, and their party is organized. — The aristocracy has often of late tried the power of the few against the many, and it

* It is chiefly those aristocrats who remained in France in the summer of 1791, who are here warned against countenancing a *civil war*. France had not yet been driven by the *court* & by a *foreign war* into her late fury & delusion.

NB. When the word *aristocrate* is here used, it is not in its invidious sense.

has found the disparity of the contest. It does not, indeed, require much reasoning to prove that officers, for example, are nothing in a struggle against their soldiers, or that the people of condition in a town cannot resist the inferior ranks contained in it; and still more, that a portion of the aristocracy cannot counterpoise the rest of the aristocracy, joined to the whole of an immense and enlightened nation. The refractory aristocracy indeed, have not even the advantage of deriving their pre-eminence from personal merit, having arrived at their situations by inheritance or by accident. The power of prejudice therefore being once removed, men must necessarily weigh according to their numbers; and the people, who form the majority, have the benefit of leaders and union in the present instance, which is wanting to their opponents. — A revolution of this sort may seem singular to some, but surely it is singular that it should not have happened before. Is it not astonishing for example, that the few have ever found means to persuade the many, that they would be more happy in renouncing their political rights, than in exercising them through their own representatives to the common advantage?

If it is any consolation to the aristocracy, they may be sure that this *mental* contagion will spread itself. — The rights of men never can be kept a secret, nor yet the wrongs they have suffered from their rulers. The great may dream that they are of a different race from others, but they will no longer find the multitude partaking in that dream. — Hence the revolution will travel into other countries, which it will enter either by sap or by storm. — Great movements in different states are indeed naturally cotemporary. Thus at one and the same æra, the early monarchies of Greece, became exchanged for republics; and the European states in latter ages, as nearly as circumstances admitted, received first the feudal system, then christianity, and afterwards protestantism, at similar epochs. The present decline of the authority of the Pope in catholic countries, and the political revolutions lately seen in America, Ireland, France, and Poland (without adverting to the imperfect revolutions of Holland, Brabant, and Liege) have observed the same sort of consent; and he is no statesman, who does not see other revolutions approaching or preparing.

Thus in a moment has vanished the power of the aristocracy in

France, for it was only a *borrowed* power; that is, borrowed (or, as some may think, stolen), from the multitude; of whose obscure, though numerous existence, the great scarcely appeared sensible. Like a recovered lunatic, returning to his powers and functions, the multitude are at length calling their keepers to account. No prescription then will be of avail against men, who possess *power*, and who think they second it with *rights*. — The aristocracy, consequently, never can regain their situation but by intermixing with the people, and becoming their leaders, when they can no longer be their masters. — The multitude, or, to use a more respectable term, the *nation*, clearly governs in France; either by itself or its representatives. — Can the aristocracy then contend with the nation; that is, can the many overbalance the few? Let those aristocrats answer, who have made the experiment in any part of France, either in quiet assemblies or in tumultuous mobs, even when they tried to strengthen their party by money or by intrigues.

The aristocracy will say that *nobody* governs in France. But were it even true, that the new legislature has no power over the nation, is it likely that the refugee aristocracy will supply this deficiency? Will the nation submit itself to them alone, after neglecting Louis XVI. and the Deputies of France, from whom they have received their present liberties? The aristocracy may fill their manifestos with many pictures of disorder; but with none greater can they fill it than that, which themselves may create by invading France. — Every one knows the derangement of France; but who but madmen will expect the remedy from these personages? Suppose them victorious, would they shew either justice or mercy to the nation, when warm with success and with resentment? Would not the King soon become more of a prisoner in *their* hands, than he is now pretended to be in those of the people of Paris? Would not a sponge be applied to the national debt, that these adventurers might apply the produce of the taxes to their own purposes? Would not persecution, civil and religious, penetrate into every corner? Would not the sweat of the people's brows be employed to triple their former chains, that liberty might fall under a weight from which it could never rise again? And would not corruption, favoritism and profusion resume their reign with redoubled fury? — It is impossible, indeed, for the aristocracy to rest contented,

or even to be safe with *half* measures. The people are in any event too powerful not to keep them in constant alarms; and consequently the aristocracy must employ their utmost force against them, in all parts, at every moment, and for ages to come. There is a complete alienation between them; which nothing but force or popularity can subdue. — If the people refuse to pay the arrears of their old taxes, either because partaking of an exploded system which they abhor, or because they prefer their own ease to the support of an expensive government; will they pay these taxes with the more cheerfulness, because the benevolent Abbé Maury demands them in the name of some parasite of Monsieur or Comte d'Artois? — The people are not to be soothed into a new obedience by the appearance of men and measures which they *detest*. A return of the old evils is not the panacea of the present disorder. The public must be gained, not forced; and it is easy to see who will have most influence over the many; the aristocratic party, who have only promises and unpopular characters to offer; or the new government, which by infinite labor, has at least freed the nation from its grievances, if it has not furnished a perfect system in their place. — In short, every unpleasant circumstance in France shews, that the aristocracy have *lost* their power, if the National Assembly has not *found* it; and if even the new government cannot command respect, it is an indisputable proof that the aristocracy cannot do it. — At the same time, every thing demonstrates the attachment of the multitude to the revolution, if not to the new constitution. We see, that they watch for it and fight for it, and if necessary, that they would pay for it. But they will soon find out, that they need not pay for it; and that the *property of the aristocracy* (for example) *will furnish funds*, without the aid of taxes. If an invasion occurs therefore, the property of absentees indubitably will be first *taxed*, and then *confiscated*.

Such is a part of the present state of affairs in France. — Ridiculous, therefore, will be the conduct of the men of *property* among the resident aristocracy, if they risque their fortunes merely that madmen may vent their spleen, and adventurers obtain a temporary subsistence, in a hopeless crusade against their country. These emigrant aristocrats having destroyed their cause in France, are like the fox in the fable, who having lost his own tail, would persuade

his brethren to do the like. Let those then who have not yet thrown away the scabbard, learn the *signs of the times*; and not mistake the momentary weakness attending one set of rulers for attachment exhibited to another. — If they reflect, they will see that the multitude refer every thing to *themselves*, and will do nothing which is not for their own evident interest in a public or private view, or else for that of their posterity; and that if it is easy to agitate the multitude, it is always effected by motives which regard, not the aristocracy, but *themselves*. In short, when the people are roused by the intrigues of the agents of a counter-revolution, it is constantly upon popular and not upon aristocratical grounds; unless where *religious* animosities have still continued, or where a *provincial dialect* has checked the propagation of the principles of the new government. Tumults upon other occasions have commonly given way to instruction or conciliation; in which the commissioners, appointed for that purpose by the National Assembly, have always been successful in a manner highly remarkable.

But there are many other proofs still to mention, of the popularity of the French revolution; for while the old government depressed and despised the people, the new one has studied their *interests*, and instructed them in their *rights*; or in other words, the one government consulted the *few*, and the other the *many*; and each has found supporters accordingly. — Hence, during a dissolution of the public force, and in defiance of insidious intrigues, revolt has no where been able to maintain its standard. During two years also, the whole country has submitted to military duty; their trade and a part of their agriculture have seriously suffered; towns have lost their local advantages, and tradesmen their customers; and the fortune of most proprietors has received a shock either directly or by a rebound; yet, while many feel present regrets, very few indeed are those who are deficient in hope, and even in enthusiasm as to the future. There are multitudes, also, especially of the poorer classes, who have already benefited by the revolution, and others who have a large stake depending upon the success of it. — In point of efficacy, the new government has certainly much to boast, and especially in overcoming prejudices of the deepest root; and this wholly owing to its *popularity*. An old established kingdom, for instance, has been newly sub-divided; all corporations

and hereditary honors in it, however antient, have been suppressed; the laws of property have been modelled afresh; numberless establishments have been fundamentally reformed; the army, navy, judicature, hierarchy, legislature, and even the throne itself, have each been placed on new bases; and yet the government remains safe within, and is only threatened from without; incidents, which whether viewed singly or collectively, appear far beyond the power of ordinary monarchs or even of despots to have effected. — If *popularity* has not accomplished this, *by what* has it been accomplished? Put it in the most equivocal form; say that the national guards and populace alone have given it currency, yet even this concession proves the revolution to have been accepted by the *greater number*. — With respect to taxes, no old government could have changed the system of them in a country where they were so numerous, with so *little murmur*, as has been seen in France; which of itself is a sufficient sign, that the new taxes will eventually become productive. In the mean time, it must be confessed natural for a new-born liberty to feel reluctant in submitting itself to burthens chiefly occasioned by a folly and a profusion not its own, and in which it has not been able to sympathize.

Woe be to those, who think that *funds* will not be found by the people of France, to support a civil war. — In the first place, a determined people, as appears from history, have always found them. In the next place, as the aristocratical party, who are the chief counter-revolutionists, possess the chief of the landed property, their estates will naturally (as has before been observed), become sequestered in case of need. Many of the aristocracy also, being pensioners on the state, their allowances will be detained to support a war, which the aristocracy has so evidently provoked. Without therefore interfering with the more sacred deposit of the funds destined to answer the public creditor, it is obvious that these resources, added to public taxes and to gratuitous personal services, will furnish ample means for sustaining a defensive war; especially if a respite from *naval* armaments, permits France to employ the whole of its strength in a territorial contest close at home. — But if such are the funds of France; where will be found the funds of the counter-revolutionists, after the intercourse with their estates and friends is cut off by force, and after their ready money

is spent and the deluded zeal of their favorers is exhausted? — As to German allies, these never have been famous either for their pecuniary resources, or for their generosity, and as little so for their union; and as their invasion of France (if it happens) will only be to forward their own purposes, France may be supposed at any time capable of detaching some of the principal of them. — If the counter-revolutionists design to support themselves by plunder, and by laying the country under contribution, the effects of such a system must be to render their adversaries desperate, unanimous, and omnipotent. The war will then become placed upon a new footing; and it will become a war not for a constitution only, but for peace, property and life.

Perhaps the counter-revolutionists have never duly considered one difficulty in invading France, which arises from the number of its fortified towns. In these towns (the works of which may be repaired or strengthened as danger presses), the burghers who are already skilled in the manual exercise, though ignorant of the tactics of the field, may make defences sufficient to consume campaigns and ruin armies. These towns also will contain the magazines of the patriots, will supersede the necessity of large numbers of them taking the field with tents and camp-equipages, and will serve as occasional retreats for their peasantry and cattle; at the same time that they will enable the majority, where they are situated in towns, more easily to *control the minority*; and by means of issuing small detachments, to facilitate either the keeping in awe, or the protection of the surrounding country, as it shall happen to stand affected. — These towns being at present wholly possessed by the nation, must be wrested from it, before the counter-revolution can become successful; and wherever garrisons are left in them by the enemy, the amount of them will be so much deducted from their force for keeping the field.

There seem several other circumstances likely to mislead the aristocracy, and therefore worthy of mention. — The *first* is, the contempt entertained by the great for the *power* of the people, which too commonly associates itself with a contempt for their *manners*. When a cobbler becomes an orator, and a taylor a foldier, the aristocracy laugh or are indignant: But if the cobbler knows how to persuade his hearers, it is eloquence; and if the taylor points his

musket steadily, he kills his enemy. In other words, in war, the power of the people depends upon their numbers, their determination, and their union; and not upon the politeness of their speech, their gestures, or their manners. Thus says the book of history.

2°. Of a similar nature is that idle apprehension, that the people have no concern in politics; and that because the great have never thought about them, they will not think about *themselves*. Whenever people acquire ideas and a will, the habit of valuing themselves naturally follows. But *itself* always has a relative importance, it has now, in every view of it, acquired the impulse of novelty. When the slave become a freeman, he feels a double value in liberty and in himself; and he is proud in the idea of making the acquisition not only in his own person, but for his posterity; and, in the present instance, he even conceives that he is conferring by it a favor upon the whole human race, whose gratitude and incense he anticipates.

3°. Another source of deception is, that the aristocrates who are assembled on the German territories, finding themselves numerous and of one opinion, think that they represent France and its sentiments. The minority of a great kingdom, it is true, are sufficient to form a very great number; but, compared with the rest of the kingdom, it is still but a minority, and, in the present case, but a very small minority. If it were otherwise, these persons would not so long remain exiled in Germany, or find any use in waiting for foreign aid to enter France.

4°. It would be a great mistake of a similar kind, if the disturbances which have appeared in one part of France, should be supposed existing equally in every part of it. Agitation naturally makes a deeper impression upon the mind, than tranquillity; (as the silence of a thousand persons cannot draw attention from the voice of a single speaker.) But in case of a civil war, not only the most *quiet*, because the most *united* parts of France, would then become the most strenuous; but the present state of tumult in the other parts of France would soon be quelled by the vigorous precautions which the times would render necessary.

5°. It is an equal error to count none as the supporters of the revolution besides its active partisans. The nation being divided

into the active and passive, and the *active giving impulse to the passive*, the question is, on which side will be found the *majority of those who are active*. As these are clearly for the revolution, the passive will not only pay taxes in their favor, but will labor in common with them to establish internal tranquillity, and even fight (were it only to prevent their courage being questioned) under their banners. Besides, quiet citizens will in general prefer the stronger side, as constituting the nation, and as offering the best probability of preventing or terminating a civil war.

6°. The aristocracy being composed of every thing which was once powerful in France, it is not wonderful that they still rate their influence highly. But alas! the feelings of the French nation have changed within these two years. Church dignitaries, nobles, and rich persons, are no longer respected as before; nor are plebeians left in a state of equal disrepute. Ranks being levelled and individuals only appreciated, or in other words, men being judged by personal more than accidental circumstances, the scale at present stands doubly turned against the aristocracy.

7°. The counter-revolutionists split upon another rock, when they suppose the passion of France for liberty to be transitory. — France is in the situation of a wronged proprietor, who has just discovered the title-deeds of her property, from the enjoyment of which she has been long excluded; and she is not to be expected to renounce a profitable succession, on account of heavy law-charges, or a delay in paying the rents. Liberty in France has a new value: for it replaces slavery, and it has been obtained with danger. — In France, therefore, the contest is not for leaders, but for laws; not to exalt the few, but to render happy the whole; not for barren rights in an age when ignorance cannot apply them to use, but for a plenary liberty to embrace the magnificent views which increasing knowledge and philanthropy inspire for private and public good. A prisoner will never return to the filth and darkness of his dungeon, when the beams of heaven have illuminated his sight, and the hand of liberty leads him into verdant meads & fragrant gardens. — If Machiavel, therefore, is justified in saying, that *liberty* is a constant motive of revolt to those who have once possessed but are afterwards deprived of it; how much more true is this of the liberty aimed at in the present day, which is benevolent,

pacific, universal, economical, and informed. Such generous impressions as these having penetrated into the lowest ranks, have become a sort of *property*, which nothing but the sword can eradicate from their bosoms. — France, in short, can never again be tranquil but with liberty; and as its rights have been recognized and established with applause, so no time can impair the memory of them.

8°. The offer of certain specific changes in the new constitution of France, to be acceded to by the National Assembly, seems the suggestion of men in the habit of thinking too favorably of their own speculations. — But the project must have these qualities to make it succeed. It must at once please the aristocracy and democracy: it must at once pacify the clergy who have lost their property, and those who either have bought it, or are to have their claims paid out of the price of it: it must at once gratify foreign invaders, and the French nation: it must at once be acceptable to the profuse and the economical, the lovers of hereditary and of delegated power, the pensioner and the patriot, the disdainful and the poor, the bigotted and the tolerant, the men-in-power and the men out of power. — Such a Proteus as this exists not in the portfolio of M. de Calonne; nor would any one trust his party for the observance of it, if he possessed it. The French nation will trust none besides *themselves*, and least of all the very men, who have wished to prevent their obtaining any liberty or any reforms whatever.

9°. If it should happen that the supineness of France, and the relaxation of its civil order and military discipline, should seem ground sufficient to encourage an invasion; it would be like attempting to take advantage of the apparent slumbering or quarrelling of wolves, in order to storm their den and rob them of their whelps. Yet this is a project with which some are deluded; as if France would stand still, when their enemies were in motion; and as if none but the aristocracy had their eyes open, or were disposed to shed their blood in defence of their opinions.

10°. But the greatest of all the misconceptions entertained by the counter-revolutionists, is the one already mentioned; namely, that because there are disorders in France, the return of aristocracy alone can cure them. Aristocracy chiefly caused these disorders by

its direct intrigues, or by occasioning constant alarms. — Besides, were the remedy salutary, those who are to administer it, are alone sufficient to render it odious; for as whatever the National Assembly does, meets with support, though erroneous; so whatever the aristocracy proposes or attempts, is ill received; since according to the poet's opinion, *vas nisi sincerum est, quodcunque infundis acescit*. — The multitude, however, appear to submit cheerfully to the very severe operations, which their *present* state physicians recommend, for obtaining a renovated constitution; and the process has gone so far, that it would be ridiculous not to persist, when they are so near its close, as to have its benefits in sight.

The different sources of misconception above enumerated may lead to the deepest mischiefs. When men are deceived themselves, they are doubly prepared to deceive others. — Let us see, therefore, after combating these errors, whether good may not be accomplished by replacing them with wholesome truths. With this intent; let us urge a few considerations which may place the revolution in a favorable point of view.

Perhaps there is nothing which will more tend to shew the revolution in a respectable and imposing light, than to prove that it will be permanent: and nothing will better shew its permanency, than the consideration that it is fundamental and immense. — As the present revolution seems to have dissolved the prejudices in favor of antiquity and of rank, it follows that while other revolutions have only produced a change of *governors*, there is here a change of the *public itself*; or in other words, a change of events is accompanied by a change of principles and minds, without which every change is necessarily unstable. — And since the principles of the revolution are too true and too wise not to impress the understanding, and too splendid and personal not to captivate the passions, the example must travel into other countries in the present state of their governments; and it will thus become a revolution not in *politics* merely, but a revolution in *human society*. — This intoxicating prospect, which two years ago seemed too distant even for theorists to contemplate, now appears obvious, practicable, and salutary to every reasonable man. — This is the first thing which occurs to be observed; and it is the more important, as every nation will be more

secure of its freedom and happiness, in proportion as the number of free and happy nations is multiplied.

But in an inquiry into political questions, it is impossible not to cast a view upon first principles. On the subject of the natural equality of man, for instance, we may remark, that we are not to understand that there are no natural differences between men, for the fact is otherwise. Men differ essentially from each other; — but men must *not judge for themselves* of this difference; since every man would judge for himself improperly. Every man then must be estimated personally by his neighbor; or, in other words, when a government is instituted, it must be founded upon *mutual consent*. — But this consent would only be momentary, if the public established a government in which they left no place for themselves. Their consent must be resorted to perpetually; and as they are unable to deliberate in large bodies, they must possess representatives, frequently renewable, for the purpose both of guarding the constitution, and of voting upon incidental subjects. — We have thus a variety of principles flowing from the leading one, that men are equal. But by equal, we mean only that they must be *viewed* as if they were equal; for though unequal in their qualifications, they are at least equal in their *rights*.

The system thus deduced from contemplating the *rights* of men, is confirmed from perusing their *history*; for, in proportion as governments have partaken of despotism, they have produced misery; whereas *representative* governments constantly increase the public strength, as well as the public and private felicity. These principles therefore rest upon theory and experiment united; and ought to be voluntarily encouraged, were they not matters of claim.

As to man, he is not a perfect, but a perfectible animal. Like many other animals and plants, his first state is that of being wild or undomesticated; and whether he is to become *improved* or not by falling under management, depends upon the species of management which is employed with him. — This, however, is certain; that the human race is generally slow both in originating new ideas, and in dispossessing itself of old ones; and therefore it often remains for ages, neither changing, nor wishing to change. — On the other hand, it is open to receive almost any set of principles in youth, especially such as are true and simple; and to these, men would

easily remain attached, did they not enter *one by one* into what is called *the world*, and there become perverted individually by the mass of those, who have been perverted in like manner before them. — Man in his first, or untutored state, is remarkable for his *cupidity and indolence*. He has desires which he wishes to indulge, without regard to justice, and without labor. When *courage* combines itself with these dispositions, and when arms, union, and discipline, increase the efficacy of a quality which is so dangerous where it is not universal, a few are easily enabled to render themselves masters of the rest; and *ignorance* following upon slavery, *craft* accomplishes whatever force leaves undone. In this state of things, possession soon becomes considered as a right; and the habit of submitting is soon after acquiesced in as a duty; and hence, society is generally found divided into the *few* who are masters, and the *many* who are slaves.

A long established government of this description lately prevailed in France; and it might have continued for ever, had not burthens accumulated on one side, and intellectual light (a blessing equal to solar light) burst in upon the other. — But the many in France have at last become earnest for their rights, and it is impossible for the few to elude the claim. The *many* have found teachers and leaders; they are armed, they are disciplined, they are combined; the whole property of France, if necessary, is under their control; France is also full of hostages, who may be made responsible for their enemies; and truth, hope, and pride, fight in union on their side to animate them. — The *few* have a cause which every day renders less and less promising. The glare of birth is lessening, fortunes are becoming more subdivided, offices are passing into new hands, the influence of the great is decreased by their removing from the scene of action, and time is rapidly extinguishing the prejudices derived from habit and bigotry, by which alone their empire is supported. There is no possibility, under these circumstances, of *keeping a school for ignorance*. — On the other hand, the new government will instil its principles into youth by a systematic education; and the declaration of the rights of men and of citizens is in itself so evident to those who are designed to *profit by it*, and so consoling to minds once beginning to be liberalised, that it is capable of convincing even the adult. — If the fate of

human society, therefore, has hitherto fluctuated, it is because its interests have been placed on *partial* bases; but at present, when the *many* are comprehended in their circle, and *education* confirms the whole, it is scarcely possible for its march to be retrograde.

It is a happy circumstance that the success of the revolution is lodged as a deposit in the hands of the *middle* ranks of people, who in all ages have been steadfast to their trust. Liberty, and the elevated views of society peculiar to modern times, have taken possession of their minds; and it would be as easy to exterminate the race of plants from the earth, or to chase the birds and insects from the air, as to extinguish the notions which they have acquired. — If force for a moment should suppress the display of these feelings, they would rankle in secret, acquire a double spring, and appear again with an overwhelming fury. — It is difficult to estimate the force of novel motives; but, judging from the pertinacity with which other nations have defended rights which were unskillfully projected or partially obtained, we may fairly compute that the French will defend *their* generous, full born, and comprehensive liberties, with a zeal like that seen in martyrs for a new religion; and that as men never before made so noble an effort to establish universal felicity and peace, so never was there a moment when the effort was likely to be more obstinately supported. In one word, a nation that has procured for itself the means of *living with honor*, will always be ready to *die with courage*.

But in consequence of an opinion, that *systems partaking of democracy can only be suited to small states*, it has been said, that France is a country too extensive to admit of having republican principles interwoven with its monarchy. — As England, however, has succeeded with a mixed government, England may partly serve as an instance to the contrary. — But this opinion may be refuted better by principles, than by examples; for as the admission of the people to a share in public affairs through the medium of a due *representative body*, has seldom been attended to in former times; neither republics nor mixed governments of a large size can be expected to have been exhibited hitherto in much perfection.

Nevertheless the success of republican and mixed forms of government even when defectively constituted, has been such, that since

the period of their invention, the most brilliant enterprizes known in history (whether in war, science, agriculture or trade), have been performed by them, or by means of individuals who were educated in them, or within their influence. — In monarchies, every thing has depended upon the accidental qualities of individuals; but in republics and mixed governments, upon the more constant qualities impressed generally upon the people. — It has been chiefly indeed to the very conquests and wealth, which were the *result* of the vigor of the latter institutions (and which they commonly snatched from the monarchies with which they came into competition), that they owed the seeds of their own decline; being either incapable or else being jealous of communicating the principles of their own primary, free form of government to their acquired dominions; so that the motley fabric naturally sooner or later fell into ruin. — History indeed proves (notwithstanding all the pretensions of monarchies to union and celerity), that warlike republics have been the best fitted to obtain conquests, especially conquests of a tedious or stubborn nature; and that the only advantage of a monarchy is, that its constitution is less easily *undermined by its own successes*, and more easily preserves its identity under a change of circumstances, as having no balance in it to be disturbed. — Monarchies have another convenience, when they are not too immense; for they permit an easy application of their *whole* force to combat the disaffection which may occur in any one of the *parts* of which they are composed; and hence they often acquire an artificial tranquillity. — But republics and mixed governments equally possess this capacity of applying the *force of the whole* to maintain order in the parts; and if they enjoy a proper system of representation for their inhabitants, they possess this advantage *in exact proportion to their magnitude*; which renders the power of any portion of it or of any individual in it, to disturb the whole, more and more insignificant. There is moreover this important difference between the two cases; namely, that in monarchies (where little is in question besides the happiness of the governing *few*), the tranquillity experienced is the result either of force, or of degraded public sentiments; but in true republics, or in wise mixed governments (where the happiness of the *many* is in question); activity and content, private enjoyment and public prosperity, are easily made consistent with one another; and the people are not ruined, as in monarchies, for the sake of their governors. In republics and mixed forms of government also, when they are well modelled and avoid foreign wars, *nature* may be more trusted to, foreign invasion more despised, and the people enabled to render themselves more respected; and consequently we may look for more economy and fewer debts and taxes in them, as well as smaller pay for public services, and smaller objects of corrupt ambition; and therefore less impediment to the public tranquillity; and all this, *in proportion to the magnitude of the country in which they exist*. — It is needless to speak of learning, for as monarchies generally choose to found themselves upon ignorance, the single town of Geneva is known to have produced more good

writers than other arbitrary kingdoms (as Spain and Portugal) have possessed in an equal time in their whole extent.

Instead, therefore of considering the immense Monarchy of France, as inconsistent with a republican alloy, we may expect the greatest benefits from the mixture; especially when the incorporation is the result of deliberation, and not of hazard; and every incident in the Constituent National Assembly, proves that energy, dispatch, and even secrecy may belong to a large legislative body, though by the accident of the times, it has been full of the most inveterate enmities and the most heterogeneous opinions.

These principles are so obvious, that it would be difficult explain why they have been neglected hitherto, did we not know the readiness with which learned fools repeat each other's errors from age to age; as well as the zeal of monarchy and aristocracy in supporting opposite opinions. — But as the people have now taken their own cause into their own hands, better doctrines will soon be taught and adopted. — In the mean time, if the general position, that a popular form of government may easily be suited to a large country, required any support, it is to be found in the authority of the celebrated Mr. David Hume, in his *Essay on the idea of a Perfect Common-Wealth*. — But in judging this question as far as it respects France, one mistake must be avoided; for the inquiry is not whether a mixed or even a republican form of government is most applicable to small or to large states; but whether, when a state is confessedly large, either of these forms of government will not be preferable for it to an arbitrary monarchy. It is, in other words, whether a large nation is best to be ruled *with a view to its own happiness*, by means of the solitary eye of a monarch, whose sight may be made dim by ignorance, perverted by interest, disturbed by passion, faded through neglect, or rendered illusory by false optical assistance; or whether, to a system of vision, it will not be wiser (after the example of the great economy of nature) to add a system of feeling; and to spread nervous ramifications over all the parts, however remote, of a great country, by means of national representatives, elected through the medium of one or more processes or sublimations of the public choice; who shall be ready to convey intelligence of the first symptoms of disease or even of discontent, arising in each quarter, in a manner too sensitive and too accurate not to be felt and respected even in their earliest origin. — Such an inquiry may seem dangerous to those, who are only interested in the preservation, and in the pampered growth of particular members of the body politic; but it never can fail to be satisfactory to others, who desire to see the whole of the system in its natural, and we may add in its just, and even in its most tranquil state of perfection.

A CALM OBSERVER.